



FORT GEORGE G. MEADE NEWS RELEASE

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Post stakeholders 'push' equipment into fire station

FORT GEORGE G. MEADE, MD., -- With one push for God, one push for country and a final for the fire service, installation leaders, congressional representatives and Fort Meade fire fighters physically moved two new fire trucks into the post fire station Jan. 17.

The fire service activities were part of a traditional "push in" ceremony. Officially the event is called a housing ceremony, which comes from a fire service tradition that dates back to the 19th century when apparatus was horse drawn. The housing ceremony was conducted for new apparatus and involved "pushing" the apparatus into the station, thus the term "push in" or "housing."

"Over the past decade, our garrison staff has worked hard to procure new apparatus to replace our dilapidated fleet through the Army's Replacement Program," said Fort Meade Fire and Emergency Services Division Chief E.J. Rouvet, who conducted the ceremony. "But competition for the Defense Department's finite resources was so fierce that our vehicles had to receive secondary consideration to more front-line priorities."

"These two new pieces of mission essential equipment were procured for Fort Meade through the diligent efforts of some of our supervisory firefighters, our union representatives, as well as the actions taken by our Maryland congressional delegation," Rouvet said.

For the first time in several years the Fort Meade Fire and Emergency Services Division received new fire fighting vehicles.

"We really want to extend our most sincere appreciation and thanks for all of the efforts of the fire fighters, the union, and our congressional delegation," said Joseph Van Meter, International Association of Fire Fighters, Local 281 Union president.

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"Our representatives in the Senate and House of Representatives help people like us who help others -- that is basically what it comes down to. Getting these fire trucks on the streets is important to the community and everyday we should remember this as an example of how our representatives help the community," said Van Meter.

Former senator Paul Sarbanes received the initial request for support during 2005 as he was approaching his final year in the Senate. Together with Sen. Barbara Mikulski, then Congressmen Benjamin Cardin and C.A. "Dutch" Ruppersberger, the Maryland Delegation was able to highlight the importance of the requirements to the Department of the Army.

"We worked as a team to get this essential equipment to the installation and through the federal bureaucracy," said now senator Cardin, who spoke during the event. "It is hard enough to be prepared to meet the unexpected challenges you face, but you must have the equipment to meet that challenge. This equipment will allow you to do that."

"The Maryland Congressional Delegation is very much committed to the installation. It has been very involved in getting the post what it needs," the retired Sarbanes said.

Congressman John Sarbanes, son of Paul Sarbanes, also stepped up to ensure the equipment procurement became a reality in 2007.

"These things that you can tangibly see make all the difference because a lot of what government does sometimes for people is very abstract," John Sarbanes said. "So, to be able to have the delivery of these two new pieces of equipment is a very good thing."

"This is a great day for Fort Meade," Installation Commander Col. Kenneth O. McCreedy said. "One must only look in the halls at the photos that show the close relationship between the firefighters and their equipment that carries them to the fire and supports them as they battle the blaze.

"Engine 12 was in service since 1984 and Truck 2 has rolled out of bays like this since 1991. It is impossible to count how many fires these faithful vehicles responded to, but it is plain to see that they hold memories beyond the kin of the rest of us," McCreedy said.

"Our firefighters answer the call to duty day or night, rain or shine, on and off post. You are there when most needed," he said. "You put yourself at risk in our protection and we are gratified that you will now be able to do so in the most modern equipment available."